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THE SOCIAL INFLUENCE OF TEA.

BY LEITCH RITCHIE.

IN a former paper, it was shown that the foundation of knowledge is simply Curiosity. I now venture, with perhaps a little more originality, to suggest that the moral reform and social improvement for which the present age is remarkable have had their basis in—TEA. The bulk of mankind, according to the testimony of all travellers, require something in the nature of a stimulant. Wherever this stimulant is tea, there is to be found, as will presently be shown, the spirit of civilisation in full activity. Where it is wanting, or used in small quantity, barbarous manners are still predominant. I therefore propound that tea and the discontinuance of barbarism are connected in the way of cause and effect.

The original country of tea had arrived, at the date when history began to be written in Europe, at a stage of refinement which was unknown in the west for many centuries after. When the wandering shepherds who migrated from the table-land of Thibet, or the slopes of the Himalaya, or, as other writers will have it, from the Tartarian mountains of the north-east, reached the banks of the great Chinese rivers, they were engaged for a certain time in the slow struggles of barbarism. Even the luxury to which they were gradually led by wealth and ease had something savage in its character. One of their early princes, for instance (who flourished at some trifling distance of time from the Mosaic deluge), giving a great banquet, set his guests to swim in a tank of rice wine, with the meats arranged within reach round the brink. But the great agent of refinement was in the midst of them, though unknown and unheeded at the time; and as the uses of the tea-plant were discovered, and its civilising juice disseminated throughout the land, the Chinese, from some hordes of barbarians, became a great and polished nation. This revolution, be it observed, did not take place, as at a later period in Europe, through the collision of races. The Chinese were shut up, with their tea, between the desert and the ocean; and when visited at the end of many centuries by Europeans, who crossed the deep, or penetrated through a cordon of savage nations for the purpose, they were found to possess the political and social institutions, the manners, and even the frivolities peculiar to civilised life.

Tea is suggestive of a thousand wants, from which spring the decencies and luxuries of society. The savage may drink water out of his calabash till doomsday; but give him tea, and he straightway exercises his faculties in the invention of a cup worthy of such a beverage. Tea was thus the inventor, I have little doubt, of that rich porcelain called china, from which arose numberless ideas of elegance in form, and beauty

in colouring. A single piece, before it is finished, employs forty hands, from the pounder of the flint (usually a blind or lame person), who earns half-a-crown a-month, up to the artist who sketches the design, while another fills in the colouring.

Is it going too far to inquire whether tea may not have borne an important part in the formation of that gentleness and tractability of character which keeps the Chinese calm and orderly even in the midst of political revolutions? Leave them alone to their ceaseless industry, to present offerings to the manes of their grandfathers, to read and write ever new romances, and they care not a straw what dynasty occupies the throne. Why, then, do we find any vestiges at all of barbarism among the Chinese, the very meanest of whom are educated, and may rise to the highest dignity of a subject? Because the poor have no tea. Tea is cheap in China, but still beyond the reach of the lowest classes, who have recourse to decoctions of all sorts of plants, which spoil the taste of the water, without adding to its virtue. Another reason is, that rice wine (if it should not rather be called rice beer), although a very weak beverage, is frequently drunk in such quantities as to intoxicate, and that, in the northern parts of the country more especially, the consumption of spirits and opium is very considerable. Opium-smoking, however, is by no means an imported vice, as it is commonly imagined to be. The English found the people besotted with the drug, which whitened the fields of the richest departments of the country; and they supplied their craving, just as they would have done had its object been cottons or woollens. In order to accomplish this, they were guilty of the political crime (for commerce may be said to have no moral sense) of leaguering themselves with the masses and the functionaries against the autocratical government of Peking, whose powerless edicts had been fulminated against the native cultivation of the poppy, when as yet the 'demons' of Europe had hardly entered the field.

The Japanese are perhaps still greater tea-drinkers than the Chinese; and they afford a more striking instance than the latter of the union of this custom with a high state of refinement and politeness. The first absolute emperor of Japan is said to have been a Chinese warrior, who commenced his reign in the year 640 B.C.—just thirty years after the invention of porcelain in China. Before the middle of the seventeenth century of our era, disgusted with the religious quarrels of the Dutch and Portuguese, and annoyed by the eager selfishness of the traders of various other nations, the Japanese grew tired of the world, and sealed themselves up hermitically in their own islands, where a population, as some say, of 45,000,000 remain to this day in a state of utter isolation. But luckily the tea-plant continued, and continues, to flourish among them; and

they permit a farther supply of the manufactured article from China. The Japanese are therefore polite and refined recluses. Every individual among them is taught reading, writing, and the history of his own country; but all beyond the lowest classes go through a regular educational curriculum for many years. The girls, in addition to literary instruction, are taught needlework, useful and ornamental, and the discharge of household duties. Morning calls and dinners are as common as in Europe, but more especially grand tea-drinkings, at which the matrons amuse themselves with ornamental work, and the others with singing and dancing. 'Chess and draughts,' says a recent work, 'are the sedentary games; but when forfeits are introduced, the polite, dignified, and gorgeously-dressed company throw ceremony out of the window, become rank philosophers on a sudden, and play with might and main like so many boys and girls.* There is no country in the world where tea leads more directly than in Japan to the study of the comforts and elegancies of society. The exhibition of porcelain and lacquered ware is magnificent; but in the ornaments—or rather the ornament—of the room, there are displayed a taste and refinement that are absolutely unique. There can hardly be said to be anything we would call furniture, the carpet serving for chair, table, sofa, and bed, in one. Neither are there jars, statuettes, or nicknacks suitable for an old curiosity-shop; but in a recess, at one end of the drawing-room, stands a single picture, with a vase of flowers before it; and this picture being always changed to suit the peculiar occasion, addresses itself in a direct manner to the hearts and imaginations of the guests. Rural parties and water excursions are another grand resource of the polite hermits. 'The rivers, the lakes, the innumerable bays of the coast, are thronged with gilded barges, which lie mute and motionless under some shady bank during the heat of the day, but when the bland evening comes, shoot like stars through the water, tracked by many-coloured lanterns, and the silvery laugh and buoyant songs of women.' In a state of society like this, it need hardly be mentioned that the theatre is a principal source of amusement; although there the ladies are themselves the principal performers, being accompanied to the boxes by their attendants loaded with dresses, the effect of which they pass their time in trying upon the audience.

It is only necessary to add, that the Japanese are fond of poetry, and that tea-drinking gives rise there, as elsewhere, to abundance of love-making. The following verses, extracted from the book referred to, but coming to us through the medium of a Dutch translation, would pass very well in an English annual. They are supposed to proceed from a young lady who has set her heart upon an inferior in station—for there is nothing more dreaded, or more dreadful, in Japan, than a mésalliance:—

'To hear thy deep but gentle voice,
Thy calm and radiant brow to see,
Oh how it would my heart rejoice!
But that is too much bliss for me.

One look of thine, by others known
To thrill me to my bosom's core—
One word not heard by me alone,
And I were lost for evermore!

Tea has not as yet made much impression upon the Tartars; and the reason may be, that it is only the coarser part of the leaves that falls to their share. This is beaten up, and moulded into what are called

bricks, and in this form sent into the desert. When the Tartars, however, come into China, and drink fine tea out of porcelain cups, they lose their distinctive character in a very short time, and behave as if to the manner born. So far from conquering China, as is commonly supposed, they yielded to its tea. They annexed their vast territory to the empire, and while nominally reigning, submitted to the government, laws, and customs of the country—in fact, became Chinese.

The fine tea of China passes through the Mongolian desert, and is delivered to the Russians at the southern frontier of Siberia. Here a couple of posts mark the boundaries of the two great empires, with the little town of Kiahkta on the Russian side, and that of Mai-mai-tchin on the Chinese. The tea travels through the whole breadth of Siberia, and at length arriving in Europe, is distributed at the fair of Nishni. This lengthened land transit adds so heavily to the price, that only the wealthy in Russia can afford to drink it. The article is not to be seen on any respectable table at a less cost than half-a-guinea a pound, and I have myself partaken of tea in Moscow which cost twice that sum. The consequence is, that only the noble and mercantile class drink it, while the peasants, or great body of the people, flood themselves with the abominable small-beer called quass, or brutalise themselves with vodka, the Russian gin. Tea civilises, so far as it goes, the mercantile class; but hemmed in as they are by the nobles on one side, and the serfs on the other (for all three are castes as inexorable as those of India), they cannot be expected to receive its full benefit. Still, the merchants are an amiable, good-natured tribe, and their wives and daughters are decidedly ladylike, and dressed in magnificent silks and satins. They have a great value for tea, and pride themselves on its quality. I remember having the pleasure of falling in once with a Russian merchant—a princely-looking fellow, in his fine beard and flowing kaftan—who scorned the tea we met with at the roadside inns, and invariably made use of his own private store, sharing it liberally with his fellow-travellers. As for the nobles, they drink so copiously of other beverages, that it is hard to distinguish the effect of tea upon them. The quantity of French champagne they consume is almost incredible, although they have an excellent champagne of their own, made in the Caucasian provinces, at little more than a third of the price.

In another direction the tea of China finds its way into the empire of Annam, Siam, and the adjacent countries. The Cochinchinese have already begun to shake off their Oriental apathy, and purchase steam-vessels; but as yet the farther races have only received the civilising beverage concentrated in the form of lozenges, which they melt into tea. Indeed, in some parts of the Burman empire, the animals use it as a kind of pickle preserved in oil; just as in the Highlands at home, it was at first looked upon as a culinary vegetable, and presented at table in the form of greens. Tea has hitherto done little or nothing for the neighbouring Archipelago; but in Australia beyond, its operation is distinctly visible. In a former paper, I described the dreadful state of intemperance in which our settlements in that valuable country grew up, and which was in a great degree attributable to the monstrous practice of government paying its labourers in spirits. Since this was discontinued, and tea introduced in greater quantities, a remarkable change has taken place. The cheap luxury (for it is not burdened with the duties it bears at home) carries comfort and refinement into places which

* The British World in the East.

before were distinguished only for the squalor and brutality of drunkenness. In the bush, it is of course vain to look for the elegancies of the tea-table; but it is something even to find the lonely stock-keeper, instead of drowning the sense of his hardships in intoxication, infusing his enlivening tea in a kettle, and drinking it out of a quart-pot. That intemperance still prevails to a considerable extent, cannot be denied; but the crisis, thank God, is past, and the reign of tea has fairly commenced.

Passing over the attempts made to naturalise the tea-plant in Java, British Malacca, and Brazil, and to turn to account the wild plants of the kind found in Assam and other parts of India, more especially the British provinces in the north-west, I may now come to the introduction of the magical beverage into Europe, and its result.

Tea was hardly known at all in this country till after the middle of the seventeenth century. We at first received it in trifling quantities, through the medium of the Dutch East India Company; and it seems to have been classed commercially with intoxicating drinks, a duty of eightpence per gallon being imposed on the decoction. In 1689, this mode of rating was discontinued, and a duty of five shillings per pound charged on the leaves. In 1711, the quantity returned for home consumption in Great Britain was 142,000 pounds; in 1786, it was 14,000,000 pounds; and before the end of the century, it had reached 20,000,000. At present, we require an annual supply averaging 35,000,000 pounds. Russia consumes about 9,000,000 pounds; Holland 3,000,000 pounds; Germany 2,000,000; and the United States 16,000,000 pounds a-year.* The consumption of France and Italy is not worth mentioning; so that Great Britain drinks considerably more tea than all the rest of the western hemisphere together.

It would not be easy to trace, in a direct manner, the operation of this new agent in civilisation; for tea does its spiriting gently. It is no vulgar conjurer, whose aim it is to make people stare. It insinuates itself into the mind, stimulates the imagination, disarms the thoughts of their coarseness, and brings up dancing to the surface a thousand beautiful and enlivening ideas. It is a bond of family love; it is the ally of woman in the work of refinement; it throws down the conventional barrier between the two sexes, taming the rude strength of the one, and ennobling the graceful weakness of the other. At the dinner-table, there is something repulsive in the idea that we are met for the purpose of satisfying the animal necessities of our nature; and our attempts to gild over this awkwardness by a gorgeous display of plate, crystal, and porcelain, only serve to superinduce an air of stiffness and formality. At the tea-table, on the other hand, although one may likewise eat, he does so without the gross sensation of hunger, while he who has no appetite at all, is spared the smell of smoking viands. In drinking, his excitement is seen, not in the flushed face, extravagant laugh, and confused ratiocination, but in an unconscious buoyancy of spirits, a rapid but clear flow of ideas, and a kindness, amounting to warmth of regard, for all around him.

Tea, however, philosophically considered, is merely a rival of alcohol. The desire for an agreeable and exhilarating drink is natural to man, for it exists in all states of society; and the new beverage, gratifying the taste, as it does, without injuring the health or maddening the brain, must be considered a blessing to the human race. We are apt to look with disgust at such statistics as I have ventured to introduce, though sparingly, into this article; but if we consider the moral consequences attending the consumption of a few additional million pounds of tea, the arithmetical figures will be invested with more than romantic interest.

* This was a few years ago; but the republic having had the wisdom to abolish the heavy tax on tea, the consumption is probably much increased.

A story is told of our gigantic neighbour, the western metropolis of Scotland, which illustrates amusingly, and with but little exaggeration, the state of manners in that city within the recollection of us middle-aged men. An Edinburgh gentleman, then young, and not yet sixty, being at dinner with a merchant of Glasgow, and finding the company inclined to sit longer over their wine than he liked, rose from table without ceremony, and made his way up stairs to the drawing-room, to take a cup of tea with his hostess. The large and elegant room was almost dark, for only a single candle burned on the table, and Mrs — was alone, and sat cowering over the fire. When the visitor entered, the lady started up in some alarm, and rang the bell. Presently recognising the intruder, she apologised, by telling him that he was the first person during her married life, now of some years' duration, who had entered her drawing-room after dinner!

Glasgow, I need hardly say, is now in this respect like other places; and, in fact, the change in the manners of the country at large is quite as striking. The gentlemen never fail to take tea, and for that reason they never fail to enter the drawing-room in a state of gentlemanly sobriety. I may be told that it is not the tea that has effected this, but that other influences have driven them to tea. Be it so. But I must still be permitted to think it odd that such influences should *always* exist in connection with tea, and that tea throughout the world should be found to accompany civilisation. I have a strong notion that the atrocities of the French Revolution were owing to the want of tea; and likewise that the kennels of Paris, during the three famous days of July, ran wine as well as blood. The Italian states would at this moment be greatly the better of settling their new constitutions over a cup of tea; and by the aid of the same elixir, Austria would be sure to see at once the absurdity of her pretensions. A few million pounds of tea thrown into Switzerland (and paid for by the sale of the arms and ammunition of the belligerents), would greatly facilitate the work of mediation. In Germany, I would recommend the Protestants and Catholics to empty their filthy beer casks into the Rhine, and hold a general tea-drinking for the settlement of their disputes.

But if Great Britain is so large a consumer of tea, why do crime and ignorance still prevail among the body of the people? Because the poorer classes still drink bad tea, imitation tea, or no tea at all. The tea that is sold in bond at tenpence pays a duty of *two shillings and a penny*, while the tea which is sold in bond at several shillings pays no more. Thus the poor are charged at least three times more, according to value, than the rich. This fact would be almost incredible; but the duty on paper presents quite as wild an anomaly. The publishers of an expensive book, with a circulation of 500 or 750 copies, pay a few halfpence of duty on the paper per copy, while the publishers of a cheap publication, which could only exist through a circulation of scores of thousands, are mulcted by government in the greater part of their entire profits! The consequence as regards tea is, that the consumption, though immense, is really restricted, as is proved by the great quantities of adulterated or imitative tea constantly in the market; that the horrible massacres perpetrated by the English in China, for the sake of trade, have been in vain, since tea is the only Chinese staple capable of unlimited extension; and that an almost insurmountable obstacle is opposed to the complete triumph of temperance at home, by the virtual denial of the genuine beverage to those classes which most require its civilising influence. With regard to paper, the duty has little or no effect upon expensive publications, but it closes in a great measure the door of legitimate speculation against those who, in pursuing business, would fain strive to enlighten the masses of their fellow-countrymen; while it induces persons of an opposite character to pander to vice and folly, in order to secure that enormous circulation without which a cheap

publication could not exist. There is a connection between the two subjects which I would fain enter upon, if I had left myself room; but any one may see that tea and literature are the two great agents of civilisation, and that it is the duty of all good citizens to insist upon the free circulation of both.

GENEVIEVE GALLIOT.

THE name of Louis Stanislaus de Bourbon, Prince de Lamballe, is familiar to our ears as a household word, in consequence of the untimely end of his beautiful and noble-minded widow, who was one of the earliest victims of revolutionary fury in France; but the personal history of the prince is comparatively unknown, although some of its details are so romantic, as to merit at least a share of our passing interest. He was the only son of the Duke de Penthièvre, a nobleman whose rare and distinguished virtues made him worthy of the illustrious name he bore, and whose blood now flows in the veins of the royal family of France, through the union of his only daughter with that Duke of Orleans who, at a later period, became so painfully conspicuous in the annals of his country.

The Duke de Penthièvre, during the greater part of his life, was united in the closest bonds of friendship with a lady, who, by her kindred qualities, fully merited the esteem of so excellent a man; nor was the Marquise de Créquy (the lady alluded to) less beloved by the duke's children, both of whom were wont occasionally to address her by the name of mother. It is from her pen that we gather the following details of the Prince de Lamballe's early love and its unhappy results. She tells us in her memoirs, that the artist Greuze having brought her some of his paintings to look at, she observed amongst them the portrait of a young girl, whose beauty was so naïve, and yet of so elevated a cast, that she desired to purchase it for her oratory, as a type of ascetic loveliness. Greuze, however, declined selling it to her, and excused himself by saying that it belonged to an eminent individual, for whom it had been expressly done, so that it was no longer his property; but the Duke de Penthièvre happening to enter at the moment, intreated the artist with such persevering courtesy to make a copy of the painting for him, that before a fortnight had elapsed, this angelic image was placed in Madame de Créquy's apartment, as a *cadeau* from her friend. Before fixing it in her oratory, she resolved to leave it for a while in her saloon, that others might share in the admiration with which she viewed this beautiful portrait.

"Two or three days afterwards," she writes, "I was reading in my oratory, when a visitor was announced, whom I understood to be the Marquis de Pombal. After a few minutes' delay, I entered my saloon, and found there, not the Portuguese ambassador, but the Prince de Lamballe, who was standing before my cherished picture, upon which he gazed with so strange an expression. . . .

"Dear mamma, who gave you this portrait! How does it happen to be here?"

"It was given to me by the Duke de Penthièvre, monseigneur."

"By my father! Is it my father?" and in another moment he fell senseless at my feet.

"His swoon terminated in a violent hæmorrhage, which left him in a state of utter exhaustion. As he wished to pass the remainder of the day with me, I refused admittance to all other visitors, and did my best to comfort and reassure him. Poor young man! I loved him as if he were my own son. In the course of the evening, he confided to me the following details:—

"You know that my childhood and early youth were chiefly spent at my father's château d'Arnst, whose neighbourhood was full of charms for me, because of the boyish freedom I enjoyed there. Many a time I escaped from my tutor, and wandered alone through our wide Vexin forests. There I would sit dreaming away my mid-day hours on the banks of some shady rivulet, or go and eat brown bread and milk with the dwellers in some lonely cottage. Or perhaps I would follow to the grave a

peasant's funeral cortège, or go and say my evening prayers with the hermit of Chénay.

"One day I overheard my father saying to the Abbé de Florian, 'Let him alone, and do not torment him, or else he may perhaps go so far away that we shall not know where to find him. He seems impelled by a spirit of restlessness, which he does not know how to repress; but he never makes a bad use of his liberty—so watch him, my dear abbé, but do not, I pray you, punish him.'

"I was about twelve or thirteen when these words of my father met my ear, and they were uttered in that tender and affectionate tone with which you are so well acquainted. I was smitten with sorrow for having disquieted so good a father; my rambles became less frequent; and I never indulged my passion for freedom, without lamenting it afterwards as a sort of lesser crime towards him.

"On my way home one summer's evening from an excursion of this kind, I paused a while on the summit of a craggy rock, just outside the bounds of our park, to gaze at the setting sun. At the same moment there passed close to me a charming little girl, who was leading along a goat. She was not strong enough to control its movements, and yet would not relinquish her hold of the rope, by which she was endeavouring to guide it; so that the animal dragged her among the rocks, where she fell down bruised and wounded. I ran to her assistance, and wiped her bleeding forehead with my handkerchief; but even in the midst of her tears, she smiled sweetly upon me, and assured me with the most silvery voice that it was nothing—nothing at all. I insisted on leading the stubborn goat home, and the rope breaking, I untied my scarf, fringed with gold, and fastening it around the creature's neck, was bearing off my prize in triumph, when I met my father on horseback with a numerous retinue. At first I felt confused at the rencontre, but told him simply all that had passed. My father desired one of his gentlemen to accompany me. 'I will not scold you to-day,' said he smiling. 'Monsieur de Fenelon was far your superior, and I have seen him, in his episcopal habit, driving home a cow which had escaped from the stable of a poor widow. Go! my son.'

"The little girl had stood timidly at a distance all this while, so that she heard not a word of our conversation. The mother of Genevieve Galliot was suffering from a pulmonary complaint. Poor young woman! . . . She was the widow of a carter on one of our farms, and her husband had been gored to death by a bull. He was spoken of among his neighbours as a worthy good fellow, and one of the finest young men in the principality. The widow of Remy Galliot had no earthly possessions save her cottage, a small garden stocked with fruit-trees, some hives, and an acre of land sown with barley and rye. She would have gained a livelihood for herself and her daughter with her distaff, but that her illness incapacitated her from working. . . . Pardon all these little details concerning Genevieve's family, and do not be surprised, dear madame, at my dwelling on them. The merest trifles, you know, become important when they concern those we love.

"I told Baudesson, our gentleman, that I was weary, and that if he would go and order my carriage, I would meet him at the end of the lane leading to Fresnoy—so was the little hamlet called wherein stood the Widow Galliot's cottage. As soon as Baudesson was gone, I presented to Genevieve's mother the only louis-d'or I had about me, telling her (from an instinct of respectful love to her daughter) that my own mother had sent it to her, and that she should take care she should want for nothing during her illness. After invoking many blessings on our heads, she inquired who was my mother. This simple question filled me with perplexity. I felt that the answer to it might raise an insuperable barrier between these poor people and me; so I replied, with some embarrassment, that my mother's name was Madène, whereon the invalid rejoined languidly, 'There are so many gentlemen in these parts whom we know nothing about!' The young girl thanked me with an expression of grateful friendliness that filled me with joy.

"Geneviève Galliot came daily, as was her wont, to the Thymale rocks in quest of pasturage for her goat; and a day rarely passed throughout the summer without my meeting her there. We used to make rustic bowers among the interwoven branches of the trees, and would weave garlands of wild flowers, or pluck nosegays of them for each other. One day, while giving Geneviève money for her mother, I told her that her present should be a gold cross.

"With a silver heart?" inquired she in a tone of innocent delight.

"With a gold heart like the cross! . . . I love thee so much, my Geneviève, that I would gladly give thee all I have, or ever hope to have!"

"And so would I too, Monsieur Louis! . . . But I have nothing to offer you," continued she, with an air of sadness, and yet of gentle, trustful resignation.

"I remember one day her bringing me a bunch of pale-yellow primroses, which she had gathered in the hedges for me. I have always preserved this nosegay: it is in a casket where I keep all that is most precious to me—a prayer written by St Louis; a letter of our ancestor's, Henry IV.; a relic of the true cross; a pearl bracelet of my mother's, with her picture; and the primroses of my poor little friend, my first friend, my sweet Geneviève!"

"One day towards the end of October she did not come to the rocks, where I waited in vain for her till evening. I returned home in a state of feverish excitement, undressed myself as usual, and let my two *valets-de-garde* retire, under the impression that I was going to bed. It was ten o'clock; my parents were absent at Rambouillet; my governor playing at trictrac in a distant apartment with the Abbé Florian; so that I resolved to open my window, and to escape out of it in quest of Geneviève. This was speedily accomplished, and in a few minutes I found myself beyond the limits of the park, and bounding over the Thymale rocks like a young roe. I soon found myself close to the low hedge which separated the Widow Galliot's garden from the road. I stood there about half an hour, with my eyes fixed upon the door of the cottage. I did not dare to approach it; but I knew that she was there—that I was near her; and the painful, troubled feelings that had oppressed me, were stilled: and truly I had need of this inward repose, for the heart of a man had beat within my boyish breast, and its power was too mighty for my frame. . . . It seemed as if nothing more were wanting to my happiness than to watch there until the morning, when she assuredly would come forth and relieve my anxiety.

"After a while, however, the door was opened, and an aged woman, holding in her hand a small lamp, came out. She approached the hedge, cut off the slender twig from a tree close to which I was standing, and returned to the house. Some strange indefinite fear took possession of my soul. I followed her into the cottage. Geneviève was kneeling by the bedside of her mother, to whom the old curate of Rouvres was administering extreme unction. I knelt down by her side, but she seemed scarcely sensible of my presence. Her eyes were mournfully fixed upon her dying mother. The good old priest began the prayers for the dying, and while he was pronouncing the last solemn absolution, the spirit fled from its earthly tenement.

"Depart Christian soul! return to thy Creator," were the old man's closing words; to which I responded a hearty amen! The curate, who had not before observed me, turned his head and exclaimed, 'Is it you, monseigneur!'

"Yes, good sir, it is I;" and pressing his hand cordially, I begged of him not to leave Geneviève in this house of mourning, but to take her home with him, and that I would pay all her expenses.

"This charitable pastor at once accepted the charge, adding, however, that he would accept of no remuneration for his care of the orphan; thanking me the while for having suggested to him a duty, which otherwise he might not have thought of fulfilling.

"Geneviève smiled gratefully upon me in the midst of

her tears. She did not seem either surprised or pleased on hearing of my high rank: she had always known me to be a gentleman, and my title of prince did not appear a whit more exalted in her eyes.

"She was so anxious to remain near her mother's body, that there was some difficulty in prevailing on her to leave the cottage; but I expressed my desire for her removal with so much gravity and decision, that she yielded the point at once; looking at me, however, with an air of astonishment, as if struck by the difference in my tone and manner from what she had previously been accustomed to. A revolution had, in fact, taken place in my existence: I had the charge of Geneviève, and although only fifteen years old, I was become a man; one who must exercise his own will, and form his own plans; and from that moment I have never had a single childish thought.

"The curate being obliged to visit a sick person at the other end of his parish, Geneviève departed under the care of the old woman, and I was left alone with the pale and lifeless body of her mother. I attempted to pray, but another sacred duty seemed present to me. I knelt by the bedside, and addressing the remains of Susan Galliot, I swore to respect and to watch over her child. 'I will marry her. Yes! Geneviève Galliot shall be my wife. I swear it in the presence of Him who is your judge and mine.' So saying, I imprinted a filial kiss on the cold hand of the deceased. . . . And I have kept my word to thee, Susan Galliot; for thy daughter's husband is Louis de Bourbon, Prince de Lamballe and Co-rentin. Nor do I repent of my choice, for I love all things in my Geneviève, even the inferiority of her birth. All that concerns her family is become dear to me for her sake: you may imagine how dear, when I tell you that I have even removed the ashes of her parents from their humble burial-place, and interred them in the church of Dreux, between the mausoleum of the Duchesse Diana and the cenotaph of Henry II. You may infer from thence, madame, how I love and honour my own inestimable Geneviève."

"M. de Lamballe had expected happiness, but he did not find it. It is almost needless to say that his marriage had been a private one. He knew that it would be impossible to gain his father's consent to so unequal an alliance, therefore he resolved to keep his union with Geneviève a profound secret, being painfully anxious not to wound the feelings of so beloved and revered a parent. The lovely Geneviève could not be established in Paris without attracting some degree of public attention, so it was decided that she should live in the country. Accordingly, her husband had purchased a charming little residence near Clamont sous Meudon, not far from his father's château at Sauxay Penthièvre, where he contrived to spend as much of his time as possible.

"Madame de Saint Paër (this was the name bestowed on Geneviève, being derived from a fief of the principality of Lamballe)—Madame de Saint Paër began by believing herself happy; and if the fondest love could have secured happiness to her, then she would have been blest indeed. But however poets or romancers may extol the sweetness of stolen pleasures, yet, to a well-constituted mind, they involve more or less the consciousness of guilt, and consequently of fear and disappointment.

"The prince was obliged, by the duties of his station, to pass much of his time in Paris, and occasionally his visits to Madame de Saint Paër could not be prolonged beyond a few brief minutes. In those days the country posts were irregular and slow in their progress; and among the whole bevy of livery servants at the Hôtel de Penthièvre, there was but one to whom the prince could intrust a letter for his wife. By way of avoiding any unfavourable suspicions concerning his beloved Geneviève, he confided to this man the secret of their union, and also to his brother, who was valet-de-chambre to Madame de Saint Paër. If this confidence was imprudent, it at least indicated a generous and noble heart, willing rather to incur a risk than to injure an innocent and helpless being.

"The gentle Geneviève now found herself too often a solitary being, and many a tedious day passed without

her seeing or hearing from her beloved. Disquietude soon succeeded to ennui. A noble and handsome young man!—an irritated father!—a powerful and perhaps vindictive family! What might she not anticipate! . . . Tempting offers for him; severities for her; and then desertion—forgetfulness! . . . Yes; these were the images which continually floated across her mind, until her life became a prey to tears and melancholy. The prince, during his visits, endeavoured to reassure and console her; but all in vain. Then he grew impatient at her suspicions; and his irritability added tenfold to the burden of her misery. He would occasionally come and pour out in my ear the tale of his sorrows and his difficulties.

"Suffer, and be patient," was my advice; "for never are we allowed to despise the obligations and duties of our position with impunity; that is for you, my dear prince; and as for Geneviève, innocent creature, whom you have made me love without knowing her, she too, alas! must suffer, for it is impossible to occupy a false position without disquietude and trouble. But I beseech you to remember that it is you who have brought her into this state of perplexity; for if you had truly loved, you would have carefully avoided her, instead of making her the unfortunate offer of your hand and heart. The fact is, that you are a man, a true man; so you thought of yourself alone, my prince: you believed yourself a generous lover when you married a country girl, whereas you committed only an act of egotism. But do not add to your error by being unjust to her who is the victim of it. I pray you to bear with her fears and complaints, remembering that she is a tender, lonely woman, and has no other earthly stay or counsellor but yourself."

"About this time it happened, unfortunately, that the Prince de Lamballe, who had for a long while been estranged from his brother-in-law, the Duke of Orleans, was induced to become reconciled to him, and in an evil hour was prevailed upon to share in the Orleans revelries at Mousseux, from whence he was carried home in a state of insensibility, which was followed by so severe an illness, that the Duke de Penthièvre became alarmed for his safety, and came to communicate to me his fears and anxieties. He told me that his son seemed overwhelmed with melancholy, and was continually inquiring for his favourite valet, Champagne, who, like himself, was in a most deplorable state since his return from the banquet at Mousseux, whither he had attended his master, and where, it would appear, they had both partaken of drugged potatoes. The Duke de Penthièvre added, that his son had received several letters stamped with the post-mark of Suvaux, and that the perusal of them seemed greatly to increase his feverish agitation.

"It was very painful to me not to respond to the confidence thus placed in me by my excellent friend; but my lips were sealed by the promise of secrecy imposed on me by his son; so I could only assure him of my truest sympathy, and promise that I would go and visit the young prince on the following day.

"On entering his apartment at the Hôtel de Penthièvre, I found him consumed by the most gloomy sadness. He was too ill to go to Clamont; and Madame de Saint Paër, not having seen him for a fortnight, had written to him in a delirium of jealous agony, saying that she could no longer endure the torments of suspense, and that she would, without delay, come and see him at the Hôtel de Penthièvre! . . . He had replied with severity—"Madame, I command you not to come here. My honour is concerned in the matter!"

"Ah! what have you done?" cried I. "You are wonderfully careful of your princely honour. But poor Madame de Saint Paër!—methinks you might consider her a little. . . . And what fearful surmises must your conduct excite in her mind!"

"At this moment we were interrupted by the entrance of the Duchess of Bourbon, and soon afterwards I returned home, oppressed by the forebodings of coming woe.

"Two days afterwards, the Duke de Penthièvre wrote to tell me that he could not call at my hotel, because the state of his son's health required his unceasing watchfulness. The prince had, during the preceding day, suffered

from brain fever, and he was then lying in a lethargic stupor, which alarmed his medical attendants. The duke ended by saying that his door was closed to every one but his daughter and myself. I had scarcely finished reading his note, when the crusty Dupont entered my saloon, telling me, with a disturbed look, that there was in the antechamber an elder brother of Champagne (the Prince de Lamballe's confidential valet), who earnestly desired to see me for a moment on a matter of life or death!

"It was the valet-de-chambre of Madame de Saint Paër, who, bursting into tears, told me that his mistress was poisoned—that he had vainly endeavoured to see the prince—and that, knowing I was his intimate friend, he thought it best to seek an interview with me. . . . "You have done right," said I to him; and sending off instantly for my surgeon Baudret, before another hour had elapsed, we were at Clamont, by the bedside of Geneviève. Her femme-de-chambre having almost lost her senses from fright, had called in the whole village to her mistress' aid, so that the apartment was filled with a crowd of idle lookers-on. They were a little abashed at my presence, but could not be induced to leave me alone with Madame de Saint Paër, until my servants imposed silence by telling them that I was the Marquise de Créquy, whereupon they submissively retired.

"Ah, madame, is it you? . . . What excessive goodness! . . . Ah, madame!"—and these were the only words to which the lovely Geneviève could give utterance—she whose days I would gladly have prolonged at the expense of my own! . . . Alas! it was too late; for the poison was doing its deadly work so effectually, that Baudret told me she could not live beyond seven or eight hours longer, and that her present convulsive state would speedily be followed by one of languid torpor.

"With earnest cries she called for her confessor, the Vicar of Suvaux; but he could not be found. . . . "Your husband," said I to her, "has great confidence in one of the priests of this parish."

"My husband!" she cried out with a bewildered look. . . . "You know, then, that he is my husband! He told you. . . . Ah, pardon me, merciful God! pardon my crime! . . . Ah, if I could only have known that he had acknowledged me. . . . And I have doubted thy goodness, gracious Lord! Oh, pardon my blindness—my want of trustfulness in Thee!" Then turning round to me—"Alas, madame, can you not get me cured? Or at least do not, I beseech you, let my poor body be buried on the highway! Every one knows I have taken poison. Alas! alas!"

"My poor child," I replied, "do not let your thoughts dwell on such a painful idea. But rather repent of the great sin, the crime you have committed, and leave the rest in God's hand."

"And monseigneur! . . . my husband!"

"He is as ill as you are."

"Ah," said she with a faint gleam of joy upon her pallid countenance—"ah, then, we may soon meet one another again. . . . Look at these, madame," continued she, presenting to me two letters which had been concealed beneath her pillow; "read them, and judge of my misery."

"These infamous letters bore the Parisian post-mark, and their contents curdled my blood with horror and indignation. The writer, while addressing "the adorable Madame de Saint Paër" in the most adulatory strain, hinted that a certain young prince, in whom she was deeply interested, was pursuing a most unworthy career; and that she must prepare herself for a speedy rupture with him, as he was about to form an alliance with one of the princesses of the royal family. Too well I could guess the quarter from whence this tale of calumny had sprung; but Geneviève, ignorant of the world and its wicked devices, almost a child in years, passionately attached to her husband, and left alone without friend or counsellor, had been crushed by the weight of miserable thoughts which beset her; and on receiving the prince's severe letter (already alluded to), her reason gave way, and she swallowed the deadly draught which was now consuming her vital powers.

"The vicar of Suaux arrived; and on my preparing to quit the room, Geneviève besought me not to abandon her. "Stay, madame, I beseech you! Leave me not to die alone! You may hear my confession."

"I must leave you for a while, my poor child; but you may depend on my speedy return, and I hope not to come alone."

"Geneviève! Geneviève! do you not hear my voice! (This was after an hour and a-half's absence, and the patient, just after receiving absolution, had sunk into a narcotic stupor.) Here is the Duke de Penthievre. He is come to Clamont to see the wife of his beloved and only son!"

"Wife!" she articulated almost inaudibly. "His wife!"

"Perceiving that she was not yet insensible, and wishing to impart a consolation which, even at that moment, would, I knew, be precious to her, "It is the Duke de Penthievre," repeated I in her ear. "He is by your side."

"She opened her eyes with difficulty, and her languid glance resting on the order set in brilliants which sparkled on the duke's breast, she smiled with ineffable sweetness, saying, "How have I—deserved! Pardon me, monseigneur—your son!"

"These were the last words breathed by the expiring Geneviève."

"My son had chosen you for his wife in the presence of God! you have received the blessing of our universal Father—of our Father in heaven; and now I am come to bless you, and to pray with you, my daughter!"

"Before his prayer was ended, she had yielded up her spirit; and there she lay, with an aspect of such pure and lovely serenity, that it seemed as if joy, rather than sorrow, had hovered over her departing moments."

"Geneviève Galliot is inhumed in the vaults of the collegiate church of Dreux, by the side of Marie Therèse Felicie d'Est de Modène, the mother of her beloved husband. I never go to Montfaucon* without stopping at Dreux to offer up within the church of St Stephen a prayer on her behalf."

"M. de Lamballe had a long and serious illness, from whence he came forth purified as gold from the heated furnace; and amid his deep affliction he appeared calm and resigned."

"Two years later, he was induced to marry Mademoiselle de Savoie-Carignan. Inauspicious marriage! Never shall I forget his pallid countenance in the chapel of the Hôtel de Toulouse, where he was surrounded by brilliant lights, and fragrant flowers, and glowing draperies; while his young and beautiful bride looked dismayed at the mournful aspect of her betrothed. He scarcely looked more deathlike after his decease, which occurred within a brief period after his second marriage."

"The Princess de Lamballe was beauty, amiability, and virtue personified; but her fate in marriage was by no means a happy one; and it need not be told here how fearfully tragic was her end."

THE NEW SANITARY COMMISSION.

If an excuse were required for recurring once more to the sanitary question, it might be found in the fact, that society is too apt to be forgetful of matters even of vital importance, when not brought repeatedly under notice. To some readers the subject will have become wearisome, if not repulsive; but as there appears now to be a real desire to go to work in earnest upon remedial measures, we can do no less on our part than direct attention to them.

The new Commission appointed by her majesty in September last have just published their first Report. It relates exclusively to London, their duty being 'to inquire whether any, and what several means may be requisite for the improvement of the health of the Metropolis;' and they have pushed forward this portion of their task with much spirit and comprehensive-

ness of purpose, so as to have it ready for the early meeting of parliament.

The great increase during the past year in the rate of mortality, and the impending visitation of the cholera, have led the Commission to direct their attention, more especially in this stage of the proceedings, to cleansing, draining, and paving, in conjunction with an efficient water supply. Cholera, fever, or any other disease to which large numbers of individuals are liable, must be either set at defiance, or rendered harmless. The Commission, we find, recapitulate the instructions issued by the London Board of Health in 1831, on the best means for checking the progress of the disease. 'At that time,' however, to quote the words of the Report, 'not only had no knowledge been acquired by experience of the true character of this disease, but nothing was known of the real condition of the classes which proved to be its first and easy victims, nor of the state of the localities in which they lived. The official inquiries which have since been made into the sanitary condition of the districts inhabited by the poorer classes, have disclosed a state of things which must expose, as is now universally admitted, the vast masses that are crowded into them to the ravages of every epidemic that may chance to prevail; and if this be true of epidemic diseases in general, it is emphatically true of the special disease under consideration.'

We have then a statement showing that the breaking out and spread of the cholera occurred under similar circumstances all over Europe. In the cities and towns attacked, it invariably made its first appearance near the water side, by muddy shores, along rank ditches, or at the outlets of foul drains. Whether in Petersburg, Moscow, Dantzic, Berlin, Paris, or London, the first victims were always found in the localities above specified. Fever is seldom or never absent from such places as these; and as we have frequently shown in our notices of the sanitary reports, there is scarcely a town in this country in which these pestilential hotbeds of fever are not to be met with: dirt, damp, and darkness, are three mighty affluents of cholera, or of disease of any kind. And it is a fact worthy of record, that notwithstanding the humid atmosphere of Holland, the Dutch, owing to their general scrupulous cleanliness, were remarkably exempt from cholera.

It is now pretty satisfactorily ascertained that cholera is not contagious; attempts made to communicate it from one person to another by mere contact signally failed. A knowledge of this fact must tend very materially to establish confidence, and prevent that neglect of persons attacked by the disease, many painful cases of which were brought under notice on a former occasion. Something appears to depend on geographical position: the cholera committed great ravages in Paris and London, while Lyons and Birmingham escaped unharmed. The latter town is not remarkable for cleanliness, but it lies high,* on a dry, absorbent, red sandstone. Among other physical conditions which promote epidemics, are instanced impure air, unsuitable food, and deficient clothing; the Commission consider the second of these conditions more likely to be a predisposing cause than real want of means—amidst a population in which upwards of £24,000,000 per annum, or more than five times the amount of the poor's rates, is spent in ardent spirits alone, and nearly an equal amount in tobacco and fermented liquors. . . . The want of sufficient and proper food,' continues the Report, 'by diminishing the vital energy, and thereby the power of resisting external noxious influences, renders the body the easy prey of whatever causes of disease

* Birmingham, being between 360 and 400 feet above the level of the sea, may be considered as singular in this respect among the large towns of England. Probably, however, the exemption from cholera in 1831, and the small amount of fever at all times, for which this town is remarkable, are in a greater measure owing to the number of separate dwellings used by the middle and lower classes, and the great quantity of ground which the town consequently covers.—Edo.

* One of the baronial residences of the De Créquy family.

may surround it. In the present state of most towns and cities, the number of persons whose constitution is enfeebled by want of food, compared with the number whose vital energy is depressed by want of pure air, is found to be an exceedingly small minority. We have little power to deal with the former class of predisposing causes; but we have complete power, by arrangements which are known, and which involve large and manifold economies, to remove from the Metropolis, and from every lane, court, and alley of every town, the sources that poison the air. Here, then, is the true field for exertion.

The Commission lay great stress upon the fact, that cholera invariably follows the track of typhus. The *habitat* of the latter is unfortunately but too well known: it is in the unpaved, undrained streets and alleys, saturated with the fetor of cesspools, shocking the senses with filth and aqualor. Incredible as it may seem, we learn from the Report that little or nothing has been done towards abating the evils signalled. Even where drains and sewers have been made, the condition of the neighbourhood has been altogether unimproved, from imperfect discharge of the sewers, and want of a proper supply of water. The evils of a deficient supply of the indispensable element are forcibly urged. Some districts, it is stated, are not only not improved, but are in a worse condition than in 1832; fever, according to the evidence, is never absent from them; in fact, the fever generated daily and hourly in these wretched localities is proved, in some instances, to be more fatal than cholera. On a comparison of three of the metropolitan districts, taking 1838, the first year of the registration—in the first case the deaths from fever were more than double the deaths from cholera; in the second case more than treble; and in the latter case they were nearly five times the number. . . . The whole difference between the mortality produced by cholera and that produced by fever is under eight per cent. For several years, the rate of death from fever has been steadily progressive in the Metropolis; in 1846 it was double that of the preceding year, and in the year just expired it has been still more in excess.

The Commission suggest alleviative measures, which apply equally to the prevalent unhealthiness and to cholera. In case of an attack of the latter disease, they discountenance removal to an hospital, and recommend that the best provision practicable should be made for rendering effectual assistance to the individuals who may need it at their own houses. This, they continue, 'in our opinion, would be best effected by the selection of proper persons, who may be instructed as nurses, and engaged, to devote their whole time to attendance on the sick at their own habitations, under the directions of the medical officer. Prompt assistance might thus be given to the patient, without subjecting him to any risk from bodily fatigue, and without anything being done calculated to excite apprehension or alarm.'

A perfect system of draining and cleansing is insisted on as the only effectual preventive means. Let this be well and thoroughly carried into effect; and although it is not contended that disease will become altogether innocuous, yet there will be no longer ground of reproach for neglect of duty.

The modes of drainage are next discussed, together with the relative advantages and expense of various forms and dimensions of sewers. The folly of making sewers without house-drains leading into them, forms an especial subject of notice, combined with an exposure of the present utterly inefficient mode of constructing these drains. Instead of being square, and made of common bricks, they are to be of glazed earthenware circular tubes, which are not only cheaper, but much more effectual for the purpose. 'Thus,' says the Report, 'whilst a twelve-inch drain, which is required by the Kent and Surrey, and the Tower Hamlets, and the City Commissioners, accumulates deposit, and generates noxious gases, a tubular earthenware drain, of nine times less capacity, or of four inches in diameter, or

proportional to the house, of from three to six inches, keeps perfectly clear. Even three-inch drains convey away the refuse from middle-sized houses, and keep perfectly clear, whilst the layer permeable brick drains, which are usually charged three times the price, are choked up.'

It is impossible that there can be effectual drainage without a constant and abundant supply of water; in some instances the construction of drains has only made the atmosphere of houses more poisonous than it was before. According to the inspector of sewers, there is nearly always a current of air setting from the sewer into the drain, so that they become 'as retorts with necks carried into the houses for the conveyance of the gases there.' A recent case of death in Langley Court, Long Acre, is clearly traced to impure air generated in a foul sewer. This sewer was five feet six inches high, and three feet wide. The filth had accumulated in it to a depth of three feet, and remained stagnant—an instance of useless and wasteful expenditure, combined with entire inefficiency. A six-inch tubular drain would, without stoppage, have carried off the whole drainage of the court, while the saving in expense would have been L.5, 17s. 6d. per house. Mr Phillips, the witness examined on this point, observes—'The sewers of this sort are only elongated cesspools; and not only is almost every house infested with one or more cesspools, somewhere within or about the premises, but probably the inhabitants, and the public generally, are not aware of the existence of such enormous cesspools under the streets. If the whole of the sewers of this description could be uncovered and seen, their horrible condition, I feel assured, would almost stagger belief that such a state of things could be, and that the authorities having control over them could allow them to continue so even for a single day longer.' Other witnesses speak of huge sewers being constructed for mere dribbles of water; nearly the whole sewage of London, in fact, is a subterranean monument of 'vested' shortsightedness and ignorance. The surveyor for the Tower Hamlets states that no provision was made in his division for the draining of courts, no estimates contemplated for this object, or the draining of private houses, no consideration of future utility or water supply; and yet the Commission of Sewers for that district were about to apply to parliament for an extension of powers and privileges. From the evidence adduced, the Sanitary Commission 'have confident assurances that cesspools may be abolished, and a complete system of house drainage maintained in houses of the poorer class for a rate of twopence-halfpenny per week, including a constant supply of water carried into each house.'

Without a complete system of levelling, it is obvious that a perfect system of sewage cannot be combined. The Commission believed that complete levels might be obtained from the existing materials, the bit-by-bit surveys of each district; but the ordinance officer applied to on the subject denounced the whole as utterly worthless—affording another proof that nothing useful or effectual in regard to so great a work can be accomplished, unless combined under one vigorous system of management. In summing up, the Commission state that, 'for the prevention of disease, and the saving of health and life, by early carrying out efficient works of drainage, and diminishing the mass of atmospheric impurities by which the public health is depressed, and for the prevention of expenditure upon inefficient works, we feel it our duty to recommend an immediate exercise of the powers of the crown; and that the several commissions appointed under its authority in the Metropolis be recalled with the least possible delay; that the law of sewers, now administered by numerous persons in these separate districts, be confided to one body of commissioners for the whole of the Metropolis.'

This recommendation has already produced some good effects: the Heptarchy of Sewage Commissions, as they were called, for the Metropolis, have been super-

sessed by writs issued by the Lord Chancellor; and the whole management of the work of drainage, &c. is confided to a new Commission, composed of twenty-two gentlemen of known ability and earnestness in the cause of sanitary reform. London, which should be a model to the whole kingdom, has, generally speaking, been slow to bestir itself in questions of immediate vital importance. The inhabitants of the great city will often contend stoutly for the perpetuation of old abuses or worn-out prejudices; let them now show equal spirit in promoting the views of the new Commission, and the Metropolis will become a centre from which the most beneficial influences will extend over the whole country. The point of the wedge is now fairly inserted, and it is to be hoped that the work will go steadily on to a successful accomplishment.

The inquiry, which is still going on, has brought to light many abuses under the old system of management. Among others that have come to our knowledge, we may mention a case of a sewer paved with granite. The employment of so expensive a material naturally led to investigation, when it was ascertained that the chief promoter of the measure—a person occupying an official situation in the city—traded in the article, and had supplied the granite. Not least among the benefits of the new system will be the prevention of wasteful expenditure. The Report, which, as we have shown, is entirely to the purpose, has the further merit of being short: we commend it to the careful attention of municipal authorities all over the country.

HISTORY OF A DESERTED SAILOR.

On the morning of Saturday, the 5th of May, upwards of a century ago, a ship belonging to the Dutch squadron came in sight of Ascension Island. Anchoring at some distance off shore, she put off a boat, which, under the efforts of an active crew, made rapidly for the island. The boat contained, besides the crew, an individual heavily manacled, and a guard. The prisoner, seated at the stern between the two soldiers who guarded him, sat with his head buried in his hands; but gave no further sign of emotion until he was disturbed from his position by the sound of the boat grinding on the white shore of Ascension: when, with an agonised look at his comrades, and at the vessel, he silently rose, and in company with his guard, left the boat, and stepped on to the beach of his prison. A sailor's chest, some bedding, and sundry other articles, were taken from the boat; the prisoner's chains were removed in silence, and the crew and guard re-embarked, leaving him alone on the beach; and nothing moved by his now frantic intreaties to them to return and take him with them, they pulled hard to the ship, apparently anxious to take leave of a scene so painful. Arriving on board, the anchor was presently heaved, all sail set, and the vessel stood out to sea, leaving the unhappy man sunk on the sand in the most abject despair. Before noon, she was out of sight; and in every direction nothing was visible but the blue and desolate waters tossing up their heads to the sky. The nature of the crime which was visited by this dreadful punishment we are not permitted to divulge; but that it was of great heinousness, may be gathered from his own confessions. Some mercy mingled with the sentence, as was manifest in the numerous little articles which were left for him on the shore. Among these was a limited supply of provisions, consisting of a little rice, onions, peas, and meal. He had also a cask of water, two buckets, an old fryingpan, and a fowlingpiece, but no ammunition. Some paper, a Bible, a few clothes, and some unimportant sundries, completed the list of his possessions.

The island itself was of a nature so savage and repulsive, as was well calculated to impress with horror and despair the stoutest heart condemned to so vast a dungeon. Being of volcanic origin, its surface was strewn with broken rocks, ashes, and pumice; here

and there a little red soil, scorched and sterile, peeped from between masses of rock upon which the traces of fire yet existed. Its shores on one side were frightful to approach: horrid precipices of black lava seemed to fringe the island with mourning, and threaten intrusion with death, while at their base were deep chasms, eaten out by the insatiable wave. Farther on, the wildest confusion of rocks, whose jagged summits added to the desolation of the spot, was occasionally relieved by small patches of a glittering, naked beach, white like snow, composed of fragile coral, and frailer shells ground to dust against the iron bulwarks of the island. The other side of the island was more hospitable, possessing a less frowning coast, a good bay, and a tamer sea-shore. Inland, a few acres of plain stretched away between the gloomy-looking hills; but even these were either wholly barren, or scantily covered with a weak growth of in nutritious plants, such as grass, ferns, purslain, a few thistles, and a convolvulus. Not a shrub was there on the whole island; and the only spot refreshing to the eye wearied with so long a glance at desolation, was a tall mountain called the Green Mountain, whose verdant sides gave the promise, which they did not fulfil in reality, of supplying something that might support the outcast during his stay there. The spot was, on the whole, somewhat like a vast cinder, spotted here and there indeed with green, but otherwise as dry and burnt as if it had just been vomited from the depths of some vast volcano. Yet the place was the habitation of a legion of wild goats, and populous nations of rats and mice over-scattered it; and one or two tribes of melancholy insects awoke with its morning sun, and went to sleep at an early hour in the afternoon. Its shores, fierce looking though they were, were more lively: flocks of 'boobies' strutted along its glittering sands in all the impertinent independence consequent upon unacquaintance with mankind; a vast turtle or two, six or seven hundred pounders now and then, crawled from the blue waters, and after taking a short walk for the benefit of their health, crawled in again, walking over possibly hundreds of enraged crabs on their way back; and the waters themselves were livelier still, for they abounded in eels, old wives, and rock-cod. The extreme length of the island was a little more than seven miles, its extreme breadth about six, and its general form was oval.

Such were the miserable and most unpromising circumstances under which this unhappy man was left to take his chance of perishing utterly, or the more remote one of being discovered and rescued by some passing vessel. As his journal, which he regularly kept from the first day of his landing, has been preserved, we are able to proceed with the rest of his history. After recovering in some measure from the shock of being left alone, and after watching with an aching heart the ship's snowy topsail sink beneath the waves of the horizon, he addressed himself to his first labour, which was the construction of a tent. The spot he selected for its site was sufficiently gloomy, for it was beneath one of the dismal overhanging black rocks of which mention has been made; but it assisted to cover his tent from the weather, and it was close to the beach upon which he, and all he possessed, had been left. By the close of the first long and weary day, a temporary tent was raised, into which he brought his chest, bedding, and all his other chattels; and here, heavy and sick of heart, he spent the first night. Rising early the following morning, after partaking of his lonely meal, he set forth to explore the island. It was the Sabbath, and around was more than the stillness of that sacred day—it was the silence of the grave. No 'church-going bell,' no faint notes of a village hymn, no quiet tumult of a departing congregation, came to the outcast's ear—the wind was asleep, the waters were at peace; but in his heart there was no peace, and he himself was alone unquiet amid surrounding quietude. He searched in vain for some green thing which might promise him food; he then returned

to his tent, and, to beguile the dull hours, set about some alterations in its arrangements; he also covered it with a tarpaulin, which he fastened down with stones, thus securing himself from rain. Towards evening, the solitude of the beach was broken by bustling flocks of boobies; on approaching them, he found them so tame, as to permit him easily to seize several, which he afterwards killed, skinned, and salted, laying them in the sun to dry. His eyes were ceaselessly directed to the horizon; but viewed from whatever eminence, it revealed nothing but the same hopeless, unbroken blue line. Hoping it might catch the notice of some distant vessel which might escape his eyes while searching for food, he made a white flag with a portion of his linen; and fastening it to his almost useless fowling-piece, he planted it in the most conspicuous position he could describe. Sauntering afterwards along the beach, he had the good fortune to overtake a fine turtle, which he killed by beating it on the head; and this supplied him with provision for a little time. As the terrors of his lonely situation grew upon him, he began to fear lest the threatening overhanging rock, under which he had placed his tent, should suddenly fall and overwhelm him: he therefore removed his dwelling to a less alarming position. He was by this time in a very miserable and disconsolate state of mind: often, after a long day's fruitless search for water and food, returning home with torn feet and an aching heart, he would pray, with one of old, that he might die. But he would by no means be accessory to his own death, as, in the constancy of hope, he still looked to his signal being seen, and himself delivered out of 'that terrible place.' Conceiving it singular that he had met as yet with no beasts upon the island, he searched carefully for footmarks on the beach and inland; but without success; the unbroken surface declared to him, again and again, that he was alone. The contents of his water-cask also daily reminded him that, unless he shortly succeeded in finding water, the most terrible fate awaited him. On one of his excursions he met with a little purslain, which he boiled with the boobies, and thus made a tolerably palatable dish for one in his condition. The few other herbs which that niggard desert afforded he was afraid to eat, nor were they sufficiently inviting to induce him to make the attempt. Every day saw him now anxious and careworn leave his tent, bucket in hand, seeking for water; and every day saw him return in the evening almost fainting, and with an empty vessel. His supplies of food also grew short; boobies became scarce—turtle were not seen. He then used to boil a little rice in a little water, of which he made most of his meals. Many, many times, and with a gaze made intense by the struggle in his mind between hope and despair, were his eyes bent upon the lonely waters, but no ship appeared. It was fortunate that, as yet, his bodily health continued good. Thus were his days spent at this time: in the morning, the spring of hope poured its assuaging waters over his soul, and he set forth fully expecting success of some sort; in the evening, those waters were cut off, and he beguiled some of the tedium of the night by reading until his eyes were weary, and then, as a diversion, he would set to mending his clothes. Finding no promise of native esculents, he thought to increase his stock by planting a few of those he had with him. He therefore set some onions and peas in a patch of soil near his tent. Finding a number of nests of sea-fowl, many containing eggs, he plundered them, and made his principal food of their contents. He was for some time much at a loss for a light at night; at length he hit upon the expedient of melting down some of the turtles' fat, and thus, with a saucer for his lamp, and a bit of rag for the wick, he had a tolerable light, which he used to keep burning all night. Thus passed a fortnight of his life in this great prison.

All his search for water had proved unavailing, and he was under the painful necessity of daily diminish-

ing his stock, without the means or the prospect of being able to replenish it. He explored the island in a new direction, looking narrowly into every cranny of the rock, and searching every spot covered with a little fresher-looking herbage than the rest; but no bubbling waters appeared. Bethinking him, then, of his fishing-tackle, he repaired to the rocks to try his fortune in a fresh direction; he spent several hours in this employment in vain, which was somewhat remarkable, as the waters were unusually prolific of fish. Meanwhile a sad accident had occurred. Turning homewards, what was his surprise to behold a dense volume of smoke rising up to the skies in the direction of his tent! Deeply alarmed, and dreading the worst, he flew with the utmost speed to the spot: he found the presage too true: his tent was on fire! Hastily snatching up his buckets, he ran to the sea; and thus, by considerable efforts, he was enabled to quench the consuming element. It appears that the origin of the fire was attributable to his having carelessly left his tinder-box, with some lighted tinder in it, upon his quilt. By this calamity he lost a shirt, a handkerchief, and a part of his quilt; and his Bible was much singed. Yet he felt thankful to God for what he had saved. He then knelt down, and earnestly intreated God to 'give him the patience of holy Job' under his accumulating sufferings. The spirit of his journal at this time is one which betokens a degree of humble acceptance of his punishment, severe as it was, and of patient submission to the Supreme Will. Thus the month of May passed away—his provisions diminishing, his barrel of water failing, his hopes growing fainter, and the future full of the gloomiest anticipations, in consequence of the rapidly-increasing heat of the weather.

On the 1st of June, there is this touching entry in the journal.—'It would be needless to write how often my eyes are cast upon the sea to look for shipping; and every little atom in the sky I take for a sail; then I look till my eyes dazzle, and immediately the object disappears. When I was put on shore, the captain told me it was the time of year for shipping to pass this way, which makes me look out the more diligently.' At the end of the first week in this month, he had but two quarts of water left in his cask, and this was so muddy, as only to be drinkable after straining through a handkerchief. He then thought of digging for water. After digging to the depth of seven feet, he found not so much as a trace of moisture, and he desisted from his labour with feelings easier conceived than described. At this time deep considerations of his apparently approaching death filled his mind, and he spent many hours in prayer and in solemn meditations upon a future state. On the morning of the 10th of June, faint and sick with thirst, he drank his last portion of water to the very dregs, and in the strength of it he went out on a fresh search for some of this precious fluid. After four hours' tedious walking under a burning sun, he at length became so weary and faint, as to be unable to proceed any farther, and he lay down wishing he might die. His situation was that of the fainting Hagar in the wilderness, and his deliverance was to prove as signal. Rising at length from the earth, he walked slowly over the rocks towards his tent, as he thought, to die. But not so: his eye was led to a hollow place in a rock, toward which he eagerly sprang. Who can paint his joy, or describe his gratitude, on finding that it contained a little silver rill of water, pure, cool, and fresh! The poor fellow cast himself on the earth, and drank most immoderately of the delicious fluid. In the intoxication of his joy he sat down by its side, and drank again and again of its life-giving draught. The treasures of the whole earth were poor and mean in comparison with that tiny streamlet. Evening was closing in, and taking care to mark well its position, he returned to his tent with a step more elastic than he had yet known, and a heart brimful of gratitude and joy. Thus one source of his deepest anxiety was, for the time at least, diminished. He was now

able to use the water freely; but whether from previous excessive over-fatigue, or as the consequence of a long disappointed hope, cannot be said, but it is evident that now symptoms of delirium began to appear, and of these he was himself conscious. Strange fancies filled his mind at times, which, disappeared at other times. At this period there occurs the following remark in his journal:—'It makes me very melancholy to think that I have no hopes of getting off this unhappy island.' The sharp volcanic rocks, which were like so many broken glass bottles, cut his shoes to pieces, and wounded his feet so severely, that he was scarcely able to stand upright. Now also a terrible adventure befell him. Awakening from sleep, he heard a dreadful noise around his tent. Listening more attentively, he recognised the voices of either men or evil spirits in loud conversation close to him. This continued all night, so that he awoke in the morning unrefreshed. The next day, and for several days subsequently, he speaks of having been repeatedly accosted by an apparition, which assumed the form of one of his old comrades. Greatly to his relief, it at length departed. Although it is manifest the unhappy man firmly believed all these supernatural events, we are safe in ascribing one and all to the inroads of delirium upon his understanding. Possibly, from the free use of water, these symptoms, which might have taken a part of their origin in the want of that fluid, disappeared; and the entries in the journal resume their usual simple character. For some time past his supply of wood for fuel had failed him, and, as we have before mentioned, that not so much as a shrub existed in the island, he began to despair of again tasting cooked food, when one day, as he paced along the beach, a good-sized tree was cast ashore. This he cut in half, and was thus resupplied with fire materials for a little time. Another difficulty then opposed him: he was quite unable to procure any fresh food; and with a 'raging hunger' preying upon him, he wandered about the island seeking it in vain. As if to heap misfortunes on his devoted head, the increased power of the sun, the heat of which blistered his face, dried up his well. Previously to this he had filled his cask, and, for convenience' sake, had removed most of his things to a cave near to the well. Thus were all his first anxieties renewed again, while there remained to him less energy of body and mind to struggle against them. One day as he wandered along the shore, he was startled at the appearance of a rude cross in the distance. On approaching it, he found it the grave-mark, as he conjectured, of some one buried in that spot. This was the first token he had perceived in the island of a previous visit by his fellow-men; and while it kindled hope, it was also full of melancholy promptings upon his own condition. He, too, appeared to be cast there as one dead, yet with this difference—as one deserted in his death. This brings us to the close of another month. In spite of the most diligent search, water was not to be found. On the last day in June he writes with mournful brevity, 'There is now not one drop!'

July opened upon this miserable man with all the intense heat of the season in that latitude. In one of his water-seeking expeditions, he saw, for the first time, large flocks of goats, to the amount of several hundreds. He vainly endeavoured to pursue them; but they proved far too swift for his decaying strength, and bounded away, leaving him in his desolation. Great flocks of sea-fowl were often visible in the strand, in such numbers, that, when they took wing at his approach, they appeared like a dense cloud, which, coming between him and the sun, completely intercepted the light. Once he found a brush on the shore, and early in August he discovered other traces of the visits of previous voyagers, finding in a rock—which, at a distance, looked something like a rude cottage—some old nails, and pieces of broken glass bottles, and also a piece of a broken oar. He now called to mind his early

attempt at horticulture, and set out for the spot where he had planted his peas and onions, near to the place where he had first pitched his tent. He saw from a little distance, to his joy, that some green plants appeared on the spot, and on drawing near, he found that a few had sprung up; but as if the withering hand was upon him in all things, the rest had been utterly devoured by vermin. For the period of three months there had not fallen a half hour's rain on the island. At this period of his history, with his miseries increasing upon him, he thus writes:—'My heart is so full, that my pen cannot utter it. I now and then find a little water, which the goats have left me. I always scoop it up to the last drop, and use it very sparingly.' On one of his visits to his old tent, while inside it, he was much alarmed at hearing a great noise, as if a 'hundred coppersmiths were at work.' His alarm continued until he resolved to search for the cause of this commotion, and ascending a hill, he discovered its origin in the chattering of a vast flock of birds, which whirled into the air as soon as they perceived him. This little discovery greatly relieved his mind, which, under the horrors of his situation, was become much enfeebled. He measured the contents of his water-cask, and found he had but six gallons left. He drank by measure, and eked out his allowance as much as he could, abstaining from boiling his food. The entries in his journal preserve a melancholy monotony:—'Went out to search for water, but in vain,' is the only memorandum for many days. How earnestly he now lifted up his prayers and his eyes to the heavens, may well be imagined! But that saying was true of them which had its primary reference to another race. 'The heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee shall be iron.' 'I looked up,' he writes, 'to the heavens all round me, to see if the sky was overcast, that I might have some hopes of rain; but all, to my sorrow, was very clear.' He was now frequently out until evening looking for water, and many times was far from home as the shades of night approached. On one of these occasions, the sun having set, he was compelled to sleep away from his cave: having lain down, his slumbers were soon disturbed by new tormentors; such a prodigious number of rats surrounded him, as put him in considerable jeopardy of being devoured alive. He took good care after this to return to his cave before dark. Despair was now rapidly seizing his mind, resisted only by a few feeble struggles of expiring hope: he had now 'given up all hopes of finding any water,' and wandered on the strand lost in distraction. Here he espied a turtle, which he succeeded in killing; and he slaked his burning thirst with the greatest avidity in the creature's blood. At a later period, he found some relief in drinking the fluid contents of the eggs of the sea-fowl; but both proved ill substitutes for water, and he was seized with an illness, which he ardently hoped might end his sufferings. His head swelled, he became dizzy, and was frequently delirious: he could no longer walk, and could only crawl from place to place. He often crawled up to a turtle, which, with his razor, he killed, and then the poor fellow lay by its side quenching his thirst in its life-blood. And now approaches the close of this mournful history. Burnt up with thirst, he drank, in desperation, a quantity of salt water; but this had nearly proved immediately fatal to him. Now, in a few affecting words, he scrawls, 'I am so much decayed, that I am a perfect skeleton, and cannot write the particulars, my hand shakes so.' Further on—'My wood is all gone!' 'I hope the Lord will have mercy upon my soul.' The last entry is on the 14th of October, when the unhappy outcast records the short and simple words, 'All as before!'

Thus perished the deserted sailor, after the endurance of bodily and mental agonies, for upwards of five months, a part of which only would have sufficed to unseat the reason of many men. We believe the facts here narrated may be considered genuine and authen-

tic. They are contained in a tract preserved in the Harleian collection, which states, in addition, that some months after the poor fellow's death, a ship touched at Ascension, and found his journal, and his body, and possessions there. Yet this unhappy man need not have died: a little knowledge of the first principles of chemistry would have saved him. We were struck recently with the expedient of some sailors in procuring fresh water from salt, which, though perfectly familiar to us before, deserves notice. The apparatus was an iron pot, a wooden lid, and a musket barrel. By this means a good supply of pure fresh water was obtained by distilling the salt water. So might our outcast have saved himself from death. How easy to make a still of the tea-kettle which he had, and a worm of the musket barrel! Two or three hours thus spent every day, might have supplied him with sufficient fresh water for all his necessities, and preserved him from the dreadful death which overcame him. Not knowing into whose hands these pages may fall, we have thought it worth while repeating this homely suggestion here. How different now is the aspect of this once melancholy island! Many acres of the Green Mountain are under cultivation; esculents of all kinds grow in abundance; roads have been made; a plentiful spring of water has been discovered, whose contents are conveyed by iron pipes to a large tank in the English fort. Cattle, and sheep, and livestock enliven the hills, where wild goats still wander in immense numbers. An importation of terriers has exterminated the rats. Fruits of various kinds adorn and enrich the gardens. A safe anchorage has been found, in which many a gallant ship has hidden; and a government establishment gives Ascension its laws and orders. Thus have the united efforts of men caused this 'wilderness to smile and blossom as the rose,' where all the energies of one unhappy individual proved insufficient to deliver himself from the combined terrors of thirst and hunger.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

NATIONAL DEFENCES.

THERE is an assumption of offence being meant, which is almost as bad as to give offence. It strikes us that this is eminently the case as between nation and nation. For one of these aggregations of humanity to express an apprehension of danger from another, is assuredly an unfriendly demonstration on its own part, and we can readily imagine such a thing leading, through a brief process, to a diminished inclination for peace on both sides. Thus to increase the likelihood of war, merely by a false imputation of bad dispositions in a neighbour, is surely much to be deprecated. It becomes an obvious duty of nations, living peaceably side by side, to be careful of adopting any erroneous views as to each other's inclinations in this respect, lest they precipitate the very evil they would guard against.

Entertaining these views, we cannot but think the present an unsuitable time for raising an alarm about the means of national defence; that is to say, supposing that these means are not sensibly less in magnitude and force than they have been at any time during the past thirty years—which we believe to be the case. The tendency to war was certainly never less than it is now among any European people. There is no feature in the state of foreign nations to give the least increase of apprehension. On the contrary, we are at the commencement of the experience of a great change in international economy, which manifestly has a tendency to create a community of interests among nations; while increased means of personal communication are everywhere making them better acquainted with each other, and thus diminishing mutual antipathy, and increasing mutual affection. This is rather a time for putting on the smile of kindly good-feeling towards our neighbours, than the sullen scowl of suspicion. We are no more advocates for a Quixotic benevolence, than for an irrational jealousy; but we do think that it would

have been more appropriate, at the present crisis, to hold out some additional signals of friendly regard and generous fellow-feeling towards other states, than to get up a cry that we are not in a fit state to defy them to do their worst. When will the time come for states to assume in their relations to each other the looks and language which give sweetness to the relations of private life—those demonstrations, for example, which will cause natives of different countries, when they meet and travel together for a few days, to become attached and friendly, and to regret the approach of the hour which must part them? Odd as it may sound—from the mere novelty of the idea—there is nothing in the relation of man to man more than in that of state to state; and France and England have at this moment as little reason to fall out with each other, as a Frenchman and an Englishman have to get into a quarrel meeting at a table d'hôte in Brussels. To render a little service to a fellow-creature, or even to express sympathy with him on the occurrence of a domestic affliction, makes him a friend. Suppose that, when an opportunity of obliging the French were to occur, we were to take it. Suppose, on an occasion of famine in France, we were to offer them aid in the language of unmistakeable good-feeling: might we not expect the same results as we find in similar cases in private life? Undoubtedly. Hours of time and pounds of money devoted in this way would go as far as years and millions in any other way spent. One sentence of honest good-feeling spoken with little ceremony, were worth whole bureaux of the most elaborate diplomacy conducted in that style of cunning and dexterity which has come down from old times as the style proper to international affairs, but which is only devil's wisdom at the best, and necessarily unavailing to any good purpose.

Some years ago, there was a district in the Highlands of Scotland which was in such a state of Arcadian simplicity, that the locking of doors by night had fallen into desuetude. An Englishman came to take a situation of trust in the place, one long accustomed to all the rogueries and sharperisms of London. His discourse was full of references to clever expedients for detecting and defeating frauds, and, as a matter of course, he locked his door. The suspiciousness expressed by his words, and, in particular, by this deed, made him decidedly unpopular. So many nations, which are meaning no offence, be provoked by the arming and defending of a wrong-witted associate. No doubt, if there were any very strong and decided ground for apprehension, it would be proper to arm nevertheless. But this ought to be very clearly ascertained before the provoking policy is entered upon. We do not scruple to avow our belief that there is no real appearance of materials for a war against England in any part of the earth, though we can imagine serious thoughts of it arising in some places if we should show, by the proposed defences, that our thoughts are not turned on peace.

Should we be told that peace-breathing sentiments are all very well, but that they will be unavailing against the attack of a bellicose neighbour—vain as it would be to coax a Hyrcanian tiger, or preach morality to a highwayman—we reply that we are not so ill prepared for defence as necessarily, on an exigency, to have only such soft expedients to look to. England found herself safe during the last war, when an amount of hostility was mustered against her such as scarcely any nation ever had to contend with. She is not weaker now in proportion to the force that might be brought against her, but probably much stronger. The fact is, that the difficulties of landing a large force in a populous island, possessing anything like decent means of resistance, are next to insuperable. There is also such a thing as the cheap defence of nations, of which we have abundance. We have a defence in that wealth which gives us the readiest command of the means of war. Peace and all its attendant circumstances, so far from disqualifying us for war, if the monster should come, are constantly adding to our best power for fight-

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ing and resisting, in as far as they are constantly increasing our wealth, and enabling us to effect those social reforms which, by extinguishing grounds of complaint, are strengthening the fidelity of the people to their own common cause. In these considerations, it seems as if we had sufficient grounds for resting satisfied with the present amount of our tangible means of defence; and we earnestly hope that such will be the judgment of the nation, if the question of increased defences should be further pressed.

'IT IS ONLY A FORM.'

The recent trial for selling a commission in the East India Company's service is full of instruction. Two gentlemen are found guilty of this offence, and subjected to all the ignominy usually associated with criminality; while no one pretends to doubt that such commissions have been all but regular matter of barter for many years. In one country town known to us, the gentled residents who had sons to provide for, were accustomed to consider the giving of eight or nine hundred pounds for a commission in the Company's service as a matter of course. A clergyman had agreed to advance a son in this way; but when the papers were presented, and he found that he was expected to sign one declaring that he had given no money for the commission, he drew back, and refused, for conscientious reasons, to ratify the bargain. A gentleman of our acquaintance once took some steps with a view to obtaining such a situation by favour for a friend's son. He found it was set down to provincial simplicity that he should think of obtaining by favour or good-will what brought several hundred pounds in the market! Such being the case, the actual culpability of the two condemned gentlemen becomes somewhat different from the apparent, though we certainly should not like to become their advocates.

It seems at first a little difficult to understand how men moving in a respectable sphere of society should have been able to get over the difficulty of making a declaration directly contrary to the truth. We suspect that, after all, this is but little of a marvel. In public affairs, there are so many things merely formal, and not real, that men's sense of rectitude as to what they say and sign is apt to be much confounded. For example, a cathedral chapter is called on to elect a meet person to be a bishop, as if it would be an error on their part to elect one who is unmeet; but there is no real choice in the matter. They would break a somewhat terrible law if they were to fail to elect the particular person pointed out. Continually such things occur. 'You sign this; it is only a form.' It may be an attestation of something you know nothing about; but it is only a form. Hesitation would look like Quakerism or imbecility, and you sign accordingly. The effect of such things must be demoralising, by reason that they accustom men to treat the semblances of solemn affirmations with levity. While they are so rife around us, we suspect that declarations like those given on obtaining a commission for a son in the East India Company's service, will be but a slight protection against a breaking of the law, even though one culprit out of a thousand be now and then detected and exposed.

MIDSUMMER EVE.*

A FAIRY tale of love, bearing the date of the year of grace 1848, and not specially intended for good boys and girls, but likewise for grown men and women! This is an odd fashion; but it must be owned it is the fashion; and, moreover, that the genius of one of the most graceful of the female writers of our day, never looked more graceful than when arrayed in its phantasy. The chief fault of the volume is—and we like to get out the critical growl at once, and have done with it—that Mrs Hall, aware of having seized upon a capital idea, has

made somewhat too much of it: that her fairies appear too often, say too much, do too little, and are not sufficiently distinct in their character and feelings from human beings. But such objections are neutralised by the fact, that the story would be very beautiful and interesting even without the aid of the supernatural machinery at all; and the candid reader accepts this adjunct as something intended to soften and refine the common incidents of life—and, above all things, to admit of a store of pictorial illustrations and ornaments, such as few works of the kind can boast of.

The substance of the literature, and most of the illustrations, appeared originally in the 'Art-Union Journal,' which in itself is sufficient evidence of the value of both; but the names of the fair author, of MacLise, Stanfield, Landseer, Paton, Creswick, and numerous other artists of distinction, afford an additional guarantee. This origin, however, has been productive of another peculiarity—that the hero of the tale is an artist; and although we concede to certain critics, that the people of this country have not sufficient familiarity with art to feel any deep interest in the recorded fortunes of its followers, still it should be observed, that Mrs Hall has had too much tact to treat the young gentleman before us as a professor. It is not the incidents of an artist's life which delight not the million, but the prosing about art itself, the æsthetic mysteries which they can neither comprehend nor enjoy; and in 'Midsummer Eve,' all this is either avoided entirely, or touched upon so lightly, as to give refinement to the narrative without weariness.

The story is founded upon the popular belief in Ireland, that a child whose father has died before its birth, if born on a midsummer's eve, becomes the rightful property of the fairies; and the esoteric purpose of the work is to describe the conflict of good and evil influences to which the individual is so delivered. But setting these aside, the tale, as we have hinted, is a capital tale in itself, and the child in question grows up into a glorious girl and a heroic woman, as naturally as if there were no such beings as fairies in all Ireland. We must not detain the reader longer, however, but proceed to lay before him a specimen of both kinds of interest—the supernatural and the natural.

While the mother-expectant was in her last exigence, on a certain midsummer eve—and a fearful eve it was,

On which a child might understand,
The devil had business on his hand—

an old nurse was watching anxiously for the arrival of assistance.

'A certain wise man—known as Randy the Woodcutter—had been sent off for the doctor; and while she waited his return, she had, she thought, frequently heard him "whisperin' and coaserin' at the door;" and yet he came not. At length, however, his well-known step was distinctly audible.

"Is all right, Randy?" she asked from within.

"All will be right when I knock," he answered, "and then open quickly."

"Is he on the road?" inquired the nurse, heedless of the warning; but before he could reply, a sharp blast rushed inward, and extinguished the flickering light of the lean candle she held with a trembling hand.

"A cross and a blessing about us, Kitty Kelly!" exclaimed Randy, falling on his knees. "God, he knows I couldn't help it. Why did you open the door before I knocked? I done all for the best, as the end will prove. Oh murder! Why don't you shut the door, instead of standing there like a rock in the lake: there's something more than the wind passed in now!—bless yourself, woman, dear! Oh, then, sure it's impossible to tell what would be on the wings of the wind this midsummer eve!"

Kitty is in great consternation; and the rather that Randy (who, the reader must know, is a celebrated seer), instead of bolting out the wind, stands staring and bowing to the rafters.

* *Midsummer Eve, a Fairy Tale of Love.* By Mrs S. C. Hall. Longman, London. 1848.

"Kitty Kelly, you're not altogether of this country!" exclaimed Randy in a low tone: "you've only been two hundred years in it—for you came in with old Oliver Cromwell; so give way to your prayers—it's no wind that we're trembling in: of the three we're watching, one came in with me—the mistress will thank me for that; there was a second—and there will be a third. You may strive against them; I dare not!"

"I dare!" replied Kitty, whose courage had in part returned; and then she started, for she fancied she heard shouts of ironical laughter; but, little daunted, she attempted to close the door violently. In this, however, she did not succeed; the wind pushed against her, and not only had the best of it, but flung her to the other end of the kitchen.

"Make the blessed sign," said Randy, yet without moving to her assistance.

"I can't," she replied; "my hand's weighed down by a ton weight." She had hardly uttered the words, when a gust of wind, freighted with most extraordinary noises—sighs, and snatches of music, atoms of laughter, and fragments of old songs, mingled with the sound of rushing waters—entered the cottage, and filled it as with an atmosphere.

"It will shut aisy enough now," observed the woodcutter, rising from his knees, and wiping his brow. "Air, earth, and water! Oh, I'm not afraid to say my say about the good people, day or night; they never did me an ill turn, and never will; quiet, and kindly, and good they are, and mane nothing but good to the dear lady;" and his huge head nodded, and his long limbs bent and twisted, in a peculiar sort of homage to something invisible to all eyes but his own. The nurse thought it probable that Randy made the speech, and performed his gesticulations, in the hope of propitiating the good offices of the company whom she now knew had come to the birth. It was currently believed that he could see and understand more than becomed an honest man; and yet Randy was an honest man, and had the unbought happiness of being more loved than feared. * * * The door was now easily closed, and the candle relit at the kitchen fire; the woodcutter threw upon it an additional heap of bog-fir: the old cat's hair stood out like porcupines' quills; every now and then she opened her mouth to hiss, but closed it again without a sound; she would lift a paw, and stretch it forth, bristling with claws; then draw it back again, each claw returning to its downy sheath.

"Sit down, Randy, and don't be shovelding the chimney, as if there wasn't a chair in the place," said the nurse through her chattering teeth.

"I know better manners than to disturb any one from their sate," he answered, bowing round respectfully.

"The nurse crossed herself with the thumb of her right hand, and retreated to the bedroom of her mistress. The fire burned brightly, yet the cat took no pleasure in its blaze, but kept moving uneasily from one side to the other, "wrinkling" up her coat, as if water had been thrown upon it, her tail twitching and bristling in restless discomfort.

"It's hard on you, pusheen gra!" said Randy, addressing the cat; "but you can't help yourself. They'll neither hurt nor harm you, pusheen. They've got possession now, and they'll keep it," he thought to himself.

"They will!" whispered a soft voice in his ear.

This may be taken as an introduction to the supernatural parts of the story; but as for the fairies themselves, we dare not meddle with them, because, tiny as they are, they would take up too much room.

We must now turn to scenes of natural interest. The heroine, with her husband, a high-born but poor artist, is struggling for bread in London.

But Eva had stern realities to deal with. Like all persons of great talent, Sidney was discontented with his own labours. He had "looked" at the old mighty ones—not to imitate, but to emulate; and it might be

that their strength was beyond his grasp, though not beyond his aim. This frequently dispirited the artist; and so intent was he on bringing up his picture to the ideal of his conception; that he would destroy the labour of a week, if any new thought—or a thought fresh set—suggested a better working out of his subject. As the spring advanced, Sidney became more abstracted, more nervous, lest his great labour should not be completed in time. He ceased to concern himself about the necessities of life, and then Eva rejoiced at being able to labour unobserved. She gloried in the great privilege of shielding him she loved from petty anxieties—the frets of life. She endured all things patiently, save the terror which arose from an idea that his mind was at times confused—overwrought, overburdened. He could not endure noise; the very gentlest tap of the lame boy's finger at the door would make him start, and render his hand unsteady. As the time approached when, finished or unfinished, his picture must claim admission, he could neither sleep nor eat. In the dead hour of night she would awake, and hear him pacing in the darkness, or see him through the gloom, leaning his head, at intervals, upon the frosted glass of the window to cool its burning. It was at these times—in these dark-thinking hours—that Sidney struggled bravely—as great men do not only with the hard and knotted world, but with themselves—against apprehensions which Eva never felt; but for her, the picture he laboured at would never have left the easel: he thought it unworthy of his better genius: he had neither space nor light for his great conception; commencing his figures on so large a scale, he had worked upon too small a canvas: the praise Eva bestowed upon it at times sounded like reproach, while at others it reconciled him to all contingencies. She looked upon his talent as certain of triumph; and, secure in that, was able to combat what, after all was achieved, would serve but as shadows to the great brightness of the future. But in the meantime their necessities grew more and more urgent, till 'every trinket, every small luxury, had disappeared; but Eva did not murmur, for Sidney never missed them. Sometimes he would talk wildly about his hopes; at others sink down beside his easel in a sleep so unrefreshing and disturbed, that his wife would abridge it. The picture was his great stimulus, and he revived to fresh exertion. At length it was sent to the Academy, not finished as he intended it should have been, for painting in and painting out retarded his great purpose. But Eva thought, notwithstanding, that it would attract the world. Poverty in England was then denied all access to high works of art; but she would look at the pictures in the shop windows, and return with increased faith in the greatness of her husband's conceptions.

The interval of suspense after the picture was sent to the Academy, and before the painter knew whether it would be received or not, was terrific. Sidney, however, poor Eva thought, 'would care little for his threadbare coat when Fame heralded him to the world, and wealth followed in her footsteps; and so they went on from one long day to another—the poor painter and his wife!—he fancying that she paled daily, she knowing that he was gradually wasting—until at last they divided crusts with Keeldar!'—their faithful dog.

They are rescued both from illness and starvation by a good physician; and the exhibition being at length opened, the painter, more receiving support from his wife than giving it, took his way towards Somerset House.

'Eva and Sidney walked quickly along Oxford Street, but were obliged to pause at the crossing to let a pompous funeral go past. It moved slowly; the hearse heavy with plumes, the mourners in trappings of the deepest wo—all except their features! They expressed no sadness; the eloquence of death made no impression on them; they kept time to the horses' tread, and that was all. Some private and mourning carriages followed.

"We shall not be among the first," exclaimed the impatient Sidney. They crossed: another mourning carriage was passing: they were recognised by one of its inmates—it was the physician. He thrust his arm out of the window. "God bless you!" he said, and every feature of his kind face was lit up with pleasure; "I give you joy with all my heart."

"I daresay," whispered Eva to her husband—"I daresay he has heard the picture is well hung."

"You speak, dearest, as if you were certain it was admitted."

"A light, light laugh, such a one as had often echoed through the Dovecote, followed this observation. On they went."

"You are looking pale, dearest," said Eva; "shall we call a coach?"

"You require it more than I do, my own kind love," he answered; "but I fear we cannot spare so much."

"I have three shillings."

"The admission two, and the catalogue one."

"But you will get in free—have your card for the season, Sidney."

He beckoned to a passing carriage, and the manner in which he threw his wearied frame upon the cushions, proved how much he needed rest.

They alighted in the Strand; crowds of persons were hurrying forward; the joy-bells of the churches were ringing merrily; every person seemed to them in holiday dress. Together they passed beneath the portal of the once palace of the proud Somerset, pausing for a moment, and looking at each other. Eva fancied Sidney became paler than usual, but she could not be certain. Her head swam round, and motes, strange tiny forms, floated between her and him. She could not have defined her feelings: they were already of mingled hope and despair. She saw clearly enough that the "elect" walked confidently in, knowing they were "well hung." They had touched upon their pictures—a grace only accorded to those whose station and knowledge in art ought not to require such a privilege. She rejoiced in the happiness of others; but she wished that Sidney had the same certainty! She pressed his arm more closely to her side. He did not tremble, but she felt that he breathed earnestly, as if nerved for trial, and she dared not look at him again. Numbers who pressed forward were haggard and careworn: brows of noble mould, wrinkled by anxiety, not age, contracted over eyes filled with fire—blazing it out in discontent. Some, again, with compressed mouth, so rarely defeated—men who shape their own fortunes; others whose frank features were changed into recklessness by disappointment; numbers, bitter thinkers, who mistook a desire to paint for the power to do so; all these mingled with the visitors—some loving art for its holy self, others for its fashion, others, again, because the exhibition passed away time, that great material of the skilful workman!

Unable to obtain a catalogue, they traversed the picture-rooms in an agony of suspense. 'She felt that her powers of sustaining such a trial were passing away. In a whirlwind of conflicting emotions, she talked, hardly knowing what she said. She sprang to the next flight of stairs after her husband; but eager as she was, she could not equal the rapidity of his movements. "You see, you see; it is not here—nor here!" he repeated. Then in a hoarse voice he added, "Let us go down for a catalogue." Eva followed him breathlessly, but she felt as if her heart was breaking. When they were opposite the principal rooms, he paused, drew her hand beneath his arm, and bending down, whispered, "Do not sink now, my own heroic wife. You have sustained me through much worse than this, when all earthly friendship was far from us. It is not so now. I am, you see, calm—calm! There may be some mistake. Bear up, Eva! He who gave me such a treasure, will give me strength to keep it! Bear up, my darling; you always hoped more from this picture than I did! Bear up!"

'Gaining strength from his, Eva muffled her face in her veil, and clinging to him arm, they descended.

"A shilling," said the porter, as he handed the catalogue.

'Sidney could not say he had it not, but he turned away.

"Pay me next time," added the man, whose generous heart was in his kindly countenance. How their fingers trembled among the leaves, as a bird rustles amid the foliage that surrounds its rifled nest: eagerly they glanced over it.

"H—H—H—No Sidney Herbert!"

"Sad want of room, sir; some of the very finest pictures rejected for want of room. A fine exhibition could be made of the rejected pictures," explained the kind porter, who comprehended the scene at once.

'Sidney returned the catalogue.

"The gentleman looks tired," persisted the man; "better go and sit down in the sculpture-room."

'Neither replied, but Eva's look thanked him.

"There it is again," he muttered, looking after them.

"I often wonder how I have stood it so long—poor things!"

"You hear, Sidney; some of the finest pictures have been rejected for want of room," said Eva.

"Oh, what agony was in the answering smile! What power—what eloquence—what anguish! too earnest, too intense for words! Heart understood heart. Never—never—never, in their long course of love, had each loved the other with such entireness of devotion as at that moment!

"My Eva!" he said. She felt him tremble: she hurried him to the open door. There, rushing forward, came the physician. Although the mourning crape was still on his hat, his face was charged with tidings of great good. He was too full of it to impute their changed looks to more than ordinary fatigue. "I am delighted to have found you," he exclaimed; "such true homage as you have received!" Before the sentence was concluded, Sidney fell on his shoulder, to all appearance lifeless.

All this is admirable, and worth scores of fairies; but having now shown what kind of interest there is of both kinds, we must conclude, but not without assuring the reader that Sidney did not die this bout, but succeeded to a fine estate, where he and his high-minded wife, as is necessary in fairy tales, lived happily all the days of their life.

LOOK FORWARDS.

What, we ask, is the secret of British success?—Looking forwards. There are but few men in this country, we had almost said in any class of life, who have not been wronged and injured—we might say ruined—and all but annihilated over and over again, they and their fathers before them. Time after time we have begun life again, and rejoiced in a fresh start. Who cannot remember, if not in his own history, at least in that of his family, the greatest vicissitudes? We could point to men who, twenty years ago, swept shops and slept under counters, who were cast on the world orphans or homeless, or who, after a youth of toil, were stript of their all by dishonest partners or needy friends, who were ruined by commercial crises and financial uncertainties, who might have sat down and wept themselves to death at the sight of the misery around them, but who speedily wiped the tears from their eyes, and smoothed the wrinkle from their brow, who found hope at the bottom of their empty wallets, and set to work as if the world was before them, who have thus won from the future a revenge on the past, and remember what they have gone through only as a foil to their present prosperity. Such is the case not merely in the classes in which fortunes are lost and won, but even still more so the great industrial staple of the British population. Nineteen labourers or artisans out of every twenty could tell, if they chose, how they were buffeted in youth, how they were starved at home, slaved by their first masters, insulted, turned off, cast adrift, wanderers on the face of the earth. They could tell of cottages from which they were ousted, and commons of which they were defrauded; how

often they had to begin the world afresh, how often they were penniless and friendless. But they did not turn rebels and murderers. They did not even sit down to make a catalogue of their wrongs. They forgave what they could, and forgot the rest. They buried their grievances, and so put them out of sight. They looked before them for employment, and above them for aid. So they set to work, and built their nests again. Such is the story of that Saxon whom we are accustomed to hear so much beholden to fortune, to position, and to successful ascendancy. The secret of his success is in himself, as it is in every one who chooses to look forwards instead of sitting down to brood upon the past.—*Times*.

THE LARK.

BY W. MOY THOMAS.

FAITHFUL, from thy topos height,
Canst thou see the lazy night
Creeping up the western wave?
Or a peeping foresight have,
O'er the roundness of the world,
Of any thunder-storm unfurled?
If thou hast, 'tis wondrous rare,
For the day is bright and fair;
And thy little eyes must be
Dazed with blue serenity,
In that upper heaven where thou
Never canst be high enow;
Whence thy diamond music falls,
Paint and loud at intervals,
Like the intermitting light
From a trembling star by night—
One sweet note, and then a long
Waveless rivulet of song;
Then that note caught up again,
As if thou with sudden strain
Sought'st to gain two steps for one,
Dropped from what thy wings had won.
Fainter, fainter, fainter still!
Oh, till I have had my fill,
Rain thy voluble melody
Down upon me from the sky.
Thou art gone; and this fair day
Now may quickly pass away,
For I was but listening
Unto thee as thou didst sing;
Nor on aught else did bestow
A single loving glance, although
Well I felt the day was fair
With thy music everywhere.
Hark! most surely did I hear
Far off, but for a moment clear,
Half a note dropped gently down;
Yet must I for truth's sake own,
That I may not half believe
What my ears do seem to give;
But that thy mellifluous
Hanging still upon the sense,
In this grassy loneliness
That so lately thou didst bless,
Passeth for reality—
A fresh and recent memory.
But I hear thee, hear thee, hear thee!
As if earth were drawing near thee;
And I now behold thee too
Making circles in the blue;
And a new song dost thou sing,
Timing to thy fluttering:
Then dead-heavy, as a stone
Shot from Etna's flaming cone
Dropping on a land afar,
Or more like a falling star
From the sameness of the sky,
Down thou comest wearily:
Only with a gradual swerve,
Cutting out a gentle curve,
Just to come upon thy feet
In amongst the unrippled wheat.
And so well I mark the place,
That I might thy cover trace,
Keeping still my eyes there resting,
Find where thou art warmly nesting.

But I leave thee to thy sleep,
And when morning from the deep
Kills the eastern stars, and wan
Grow their brethren every one,
Hither will I come again,
Through the deep grass wet with rain,
Or with heavy summer dew,
Ripping all the meadow through,
Once again to hear thy song
Like the morning fresh and strong,
Flung about so prodigal,
Caring not where it may fall,
Just as if 'twere nothing worth;
Heeding not though all the earth
Sleep unconscious of thy lay,
So that thou canst give away
Joy, which not o'erflowing there
Would become too keen to bear.
Singers are there on the ground
To this tyrant planet bound;
Poets, whose sweet song to hear,
Men forget their daily care;
But like thee they cannot be—
With no selfish vanity—
Some must hear them, 'or they die.'

ECONOMIC PREPARATION OF FOOD.

A short time ago, No. 201, we presented a brief account of the method suggested by Liebig for preparing food economically, and are gratified to find that it has been practically and advantageously put to the test. In a letter written to us by Mr Leach, of Vernon House (a Retreat for Mental Invalids), Breton-Ferry, near Neath, South Wales, the following passages occur:—

'Permit me to thank you for calling attention to the very valuable work of Baron Liebig on animal chemistry. In consequence of reading your paper on the subject, I have had the meat, soup, &c. of this large establishment (about 160 inmates) cooked according to Liebig's directions; the result is, that the waste in cooking is lessened 50 per cent., while the quality of the food is greatly improved. Were all the animal food in the whole kingdom cooked in this manner, an immense national saving would be obtained; and what is even of more importance, the national health would be greatly benefited—thanks to you and Liebig!'

We of course disclaim all title to thanks: we have only performed a duty to the public in disseminating the knowledge of a fact likely to prove generally advantageous.

THE PULQUE OF MEXICO.

The maguey, American aloe—Agave Americana—is cultivated over an extent of country embracing 50,000 square miles. In the city of Mexico alone, the consumption of pulque amounts to the enormous quantity of eleven millions of gallons per annum, and a considerable revenue from its sale is derived by government. The plant attains maturity in a period varying from eight to fourteen years, when it flowers; and it is during the stage of inflorescence only that the saccharine juice is extracted. The central stem which encloses the incipient flower is then cut off near the bottom, and a cavity or basin is discovered, over which the surrounding leaves are drawn close and tied. Into this reservoir the juice distils, which otherwise would have risen to nourish and support the flower. It is removed three or four times during the twenty-four hours, yielding a quantity of liquor varying from a quart to a gallon and a half. The juice is extracted by means of a syphon, made of a species of gourd called *acajote*, one end of which is placed in the liquor, the other in the mouth of a person, who by suction draws up the fluid into the pipe, and deposits it in the bowls he has with him for the purpose. It is then placed in earthen jars, and a little old pulque—madre de pulque—is added, when it soon ferments, and is immediately ready for use. The fermentation occupies two or three days, and when it ceases, the pulque is in fine order. Old pulque has a slightly unpleasant odour; but when fresh, is brisk and sparkling, and the most cooling, refreshing, and delicious drink that ever was invented for thirsty mortal.—*Adventures in Mexico*.

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